

ROGUE ACTION CENTER

Tools for Organizing: Being an Effective Media Spokesperson

1. Prepare to frame the story

Public interest
Community values
Who are "we" speaking for?

Reinforce the frame by making the right choices on...

Tone - reasonable, problem solving, likeable

Spokespeople - workers, community members, users of services, allies, elected officials, leaders/staff

Examples - the right statistics and anecdotes

Vocabulary - understandable, not jargon; tap into public values

Sound bites - not just quotable but reinforces frame; 12 to 20 words

Visuals - what background or choice of location reinforces frame?

Channels - TV? Radio? Print? Web? No media?

Prepare yourself.

Take time to plan frame, tone, vocabulary, sound bites.

Write down what you plan to say to force yourself to organize your thoughts.

Practice your main message and dealing with likely questions.

2. Make the media opportunity work for you.

An interview is not a conversation.

Don't wait for the right question to shift to the right frame.

If a question will take you off the frame, change the subject, and bridge back to your topic.

Everything may be quoted. Don't provide quotes that undermine your frame.

Repeat your main point over and over.

Stop talking when you have made your point.

Speak in complete sentences.

If TV...

Look at the reporter

Don't move or sway

Smile more than feels comfortable

Wear solid colors -- but not white or red

3. Learn from experience and plan the next steps.

Study the coverage and get honest feedback

How well did you stick to the frame and tone you chose?

Where they the right choices?

What can be improved next time?

What should be done to follow up on this interview or news event?